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**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**

# **VITAL RECORDS GUIDANCE FOR TOWN CLERKS**

## **BIRTH REGISTRATION**

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**Additional Resources are available at [healthvermont.gov](http://healthvermont.gov)**

**<https://www.healthvermont.gov/stats/vital-records/information-town-and-city-clerks>**

**For information on printing certified and noncertified copies of birth certificates, please refer to the VRIMS User's Guide for Town Clerks:**

**[https://www.healthvermont.gov/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/HS\\_VR\\_VRIMSUserGuideToWnClerks.pdf](https://www.healthvermont.gov/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/HS_VR_VRIMSUserGuideToWnClerks.pdf)**

## **I. REGISTRATION OF BIRTH RECORDS**

Within five (5) business days of a birth in Vermont, the attending physician or designee or midwife, or if no attending physician or midwife is present, a parent of the child or a legal guardian of a mother under 18 years of age shall file a report of birth which shall be registered by the State Registrar in the Department of Health Electronic Birth Registration System (EBRS) for inclusion in the Statewide Registration System. (**18 V.S.A. § 5071**).

The morning after a birth certificate is registered in the EBRS, the town of birth and the town of residence receive an autogenerated email indicating the birth record has been registered.

If your town is maintaining records registered after July 1, 2019, you can print a file copy directly from the Vital Records Issuance Management System (VRIMS) which will contain the date of registration and the State Registrar's signature and the State File Number.

## **II. THE STATEWIDE REGISTRATION SYSTEM**

The Statewide Registration System is the sole official repository of data from birth certificates registered on or after January 1, 1909.

- Access to this system is through the VITAL RECORDS ISSUANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (VRIMS).  
<https://www.healthvermont.gov/stats/vital-records/information-town-and-city-clerks>
- Town clerks shall aid in the efficient administration of the Statewide Registration System and shall act as agents to issue copies of birth certificates from the Statewide Registration System in accordance with **18 V.S.A. § 5016**.

## **III. CORRECTIONS AND AMENDMENTS**

Within 6 months after the date of birth, a birth certificate may be corrected or completed per guidelines in **18 V.S.A. § 5073**. After 6 months from the date of birth, a birth certificate may be amended per guidelines in **18 V.S.A. § 5075**.

- The Vermont Department of Health "Application to Correct or Amend a Birth Certificate" form is available online:  
<https://www.healthvermont.gov/stats/vital-records/vital-records-forms-information>
- Once a correction or amendment is processed by the State Registrar in EBRS, the updated record is reflected in VRIMS. Details about a correction are not displayed on the birth certificate, but an amended certificate will indicate "Amended" and contain the date of amendment. A certificate with a name change will indicate "Court Amended" and the date of amendment.

- If the State Registrar corrects or completes or amends a certificate that was registered prior to July 1, 2019, she shall notify the town clerk or clerks with custody of the certificate, who shall **replace and dispose** of the uncorrected or unamended certificate and update indexes. (18 V.S.A. § 5073 and 18 V.S.A. § 5075)

#### IV. AUTOMATIC EMAIL NOTIFICATION TO TOWN CLERKS

The day after a birth certificate is registered or a correction or amendment is processed, an automated email which includes the registrant's name, date of event, state file number and the reason for inclusion is sent to the town of birth and to the town of residence.

- Email notifications to Town Clerks will be sent to the email address listed in the directory maintained by the Secretary of State. The directory, entitled "Excel Spreadsheet with Town Clerk Contact Information" is located here:  
<https://www.sec.state.vt.us/elections/town-clerks-election-workers.aspx>
  - **It is the responsibility of each Town Clerk to make sure their email address is current and up to date in this directory. To edit your email address, you will need to contact the Secretary of State's Office.**
- The email notification will be a generic message that reads:  
*"This is to inform you that the following certificates associated with your town have been Registered, Corrected, or Amended. Please print new File Copies from the Vital Records Issuance Management System, dispose of original/previous copies and update indexes accordingly."*
- The email notification will include a **Reason for Inclusion** column with one of the following labels:
  - "Registered"**  
A new birth was registered in the Statewide Registration System.
  - "Corrected"**  
A birth or death certificate has been corrected upon application to the Vital Records Office.
  - "Amended"**  
The birth certificate was amended.
    - If the birth certificate was amended due to a court ordered Name Change, there will be an asterisk (\*) after the Last Name and the following message will appear under the list of birth certificates: *\*Contact Vital Records if you are unsure what record this replaces.*
    - **EXCEPTIONS:** When an adoption or a sex change is processed on a record, you will not receive an automated email. Instead, Vital Records will send a letter with instructions accordingly.
  - "Administrative Correction"**  
State Registrar corrected an error(s) on the birth certificate in the Statewide Registration System to match the contents of the original hard copy of the birth certificate filed in the town of birth per the Error Notification process (See

Section V below). In these cases, you need not take any action. This is just alerting you that the administrative correction has occurred.

## **V. REPLACE AND DISPOSE**

Per Vital Records Rule:

*10.1 Pursuant to 18 V.S.A. § 5075(e) and 18 V.S.A. § 5202(a)(e), “replace and dispose” shall include the following:*

*10.1.1 The custodian of the birth or death certificate confirms they have accurately identified the certificate that is to be removed; and*

*10.1.1.1 The custodian shreds the certificate using a paper shredder that is in the office of the issuing agent, or places the certificate in a storage container that is used solely for the collection of off-site shredding by a contractor; or*

*10.1.1.2 The certificate is placed into a recycling container that will be collected by an off-site shredding contractor within 24 hours of the certificate’s disposal.*

The link to Vital Record rule is found here (scroll to bottom of “Title” list):

<https://www.healthvermont.gov/about-us/laws-regulations/rules-and-regulations>

## **VI. ERROR NOTIFICATION / MISSING RECORDS**

If a Town Clerk discovers that the electronic version of a birth record in VRIMS does not match the information on the hard copy on file in their office, or that a birth record is missing from the Statewide Registration System, they shall immediately follow the error notification process outlined below. Error notification procedures can also be found in the General Instruction Manual for Town Clerks, Section VIII.

- Error notifications must be submitted by birth town only. If you are a residence town and you find an error on the record on file in your office, you will need to contact town of birth and request that the clerk submit the “error notification”.
- Birth town will attach a scanned copy of the certificate on file in their office and email notice to [vitalrecords@vermont.gov](mailto:vitalrecords@vermont.gov)
- The subject line of the email should be:
  - Error Notification [Name on record, Date of Birth], or
  - Missing Record [Name on record, Date of Birth],
- **Clearly list in the body of the email the errors along with the correct information.**
  - Please note older records may have blank fields in VRIMS. These are not errors, but a limitation of the registration system for older records.
- When the Vital Records Office has completed the correction, the updated information will be immediately available in VRIMS. The next morning, an autogenerated notification of correction will be emailed to the birth or death town and residence town.

- The autogenerated email will indicate “Administrative Correction”. In such case, you do not need to “Print and Replace” records that have administrative corrections.
- Missing records that must be added to the Statewide Registration System may take several days to process.

When the Town Clerk receives notice of a newly registered birth record for their town, it is good practice to review the electronic record in VRIMS. If an obvious error is found – such as an incorrect town of residence, a misspelling of a street address, or transposition of letters - the clerk shall send an email to [vitalrecords@vermont.gov](mailto:vitalrecords@vermont.gov)

- The subject line of the email should be:
  - Error on New Birth Record [Name on record, Date of birth]
- **Clearly list in the body of the email the errors along with the correct information.**

## **VII. DELAYED CERTIFICATE OF BIRTH**

Per **18 V.S.A. § 5075 (b)**, A person born in this State for whom no certificate of birth was filed during the first year following birth, or his or her parent or guardian, may apply to the State Registrar to determine the facts with respect to the birth and to issue a delayed certificate of birth.

- The application forms and instructions are available online:  
<https://www.healthvermont.gov/stats/vital-records/vital-records-forms-information>

## **VIII. PRESERVATION OF BIRTH RECORDS**

A town clerk shall permanently preserve, at the office of the clerk, birth certificates registered prior to July 1, 2019. (**18 V.S.A. § 5007**).

Births registered prior to January 1, 1909:

- Shall not be incorporated into the Statewide Registration System,
- Shall be maintained at the offices of town clerks as specified in **18 V.S.A. § 5007**, and
- Shall not be eligible for amendment.

Please note that the Vital Records Office does not advise on the Town Clerk’s choice to print - for public inspection - file copies of births registered on or after July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019. However, if a Clerk does choose to file printed copies for public inspection, the Clerk must be responsible for maintaining and updating these copies.